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| **Assignment 1: What is a life of significance?**  Write an essay (4-5 pages) in which you draw from the materials we have examined as a class to answer the question, what does it mean to live a life of significance? By what criteria or measure might we judge a life as significant? What qualities, characteristics, actions, and attitudes might be associated with such a life? | | | | |
|  | **4 – Exemplary** | **3 – Accomplished** | **2 – Developing** | **1 – Beginning** |
| **Articulates Points, Perspectives, or Analytic Conclusions**  *States criteria, features, qualities, principles, characteristics, tension points, or paradoxes*  30% | Identifies, with a thesis statement, three or more pillars of what constitutes a life of significance; author has taken ownership of overall approach and answered the question, “so what?” Work may offer surprising, creative insight or show thoughtfulness that exceeds expectations | Identifies three or more pillars of what constitutes a life of significance that provide insight into core issues; additional clarification of individual points or overall stance would improve main points/ideas; author has taken ownership of project | Identifies pillars of what constitutes a life of significance; additional pillars may be implied but not stated; relevance or insight (e.g., “so what?”) into core issues may be implied; conclusions may appear superficial; ownership/authority emerges at various points in the essay | Pillars may be missing, not yet clearly stated, more implied than stated, or appear to parrot other ideas; author may not yet have taken ownership for overall perspective or stance |
| **Provides Evidence and Justification**  *Includes details from specific artifacts and provides justification in relation to main ideas/points*  *30%* | References and uses details from specific course materials and/or other sources to develop and support ideas; relationship between evidence and main points is explicit, fully elaborated, and follows logically; interpretations and logic may be particularly thoughtful or artful | References and uses details from specific course materials and/or other sources to develop and support ideas; additional elaboration or details might improve explication between points/ideas and evidence; logical relationship is generally clear, but additional explanation might improve | References course materials and/or other sources, yet provides limited, irrelevant, or insufficient details and explanation in support of main ideas; explanation and justification may be thin, overly presumptive, or more implied than stated; relationship may be logical, but not yet made explicit due to missing details or justification; may raise more questions than it answers | Cursory reference to course materials and/or other sources; relevance between materials referenced and main ideas is not yet made explicit, leaving the reader to determine how evidence supports or justifies main points and ideas; referenced materials, even specific details, may be plunked, shoe-horned, or air dropped into the essay without sufficient explanation |
| **Addresses Alternative Perspectives and Points of View**  *Consideration of alternative understandings*  *25%* | Names and responds to specific alternate understandings of what constitutes a “life of significance”; views are accurately represented and/or summarized; response is highly appropriate in relation to the essay’s main argument or thesis; may anticipate objections | Names and responds to alternative understandings of what constitutes a “life of significance”; summary or response to views is mostly accurate and/or summarized; some aspects of response may require additional elaboration; effort has been made to wrestle with view | Alternative views may be named and referenced, but summary may be thin or incomplete and/or response is not yet fully developed in relation to the main thesis; effort has been made to wrestle with views, yet write up is incomplete | Alternative views are not explicitly named, even if implied; if named, summary and response are thin, misrepresent the view, or are not linked to main thesis; shows little or no effort yet to address or wrestle with alternate views |
| **Meets Format and Style Demands**  *Meets audience expectations for formatting, punctuation, grammar, and other stylistic elements*  *15%* | Overall organization is clear, with well-placed paragraphs and sections; sentence-level language is essentially error free, requiring little additional proofreading; citations and quotations are consistent and appropriately integrated for the genre; language and style may be particularly effective | Overall organization may be clear, even if some paragraphs or sections appear out of place; sentence-level language is generally error free; citations and quotations are consistent and appropriately integrated for the genre | Overall organization may be appropriate, but not clearly signaled or may rely on an organization inappropriate for the main argument; sentence-level language includes some errors that distract; citations and quotations may not be always complete or consistent and may not always be appropriately integrated for the genre | Organization may hinder reader comprehension or appear confusing; sentence-level errors and integration of citations distract from meaning; essay has not yet been proofread or prepared for readers |